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**Mission Statement:**

This magazine is dedicated to proclaiming the gospel of Jesus Christ and bearing witness to the everlasting promises of God. Our intention is to inspire the Saints to walk faithfully in the name of our Savior, bearing fruit worthy of the Kingdom of God.

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## The Hope Within Us

*By Barbra Jordison*

Since the beginning of time, within the family of God we see the desire to bequeath to future generations heirlooms of testimony and faith. When Jacob received the plates of brass from his brother Nephi, he too understood what was being asked of him, saying that “if there were preaching which was sacred, or revelation which was great, or prophesying, that (he was to) engrave the heads of them upon these plates, and touch upon them as much as it were possible, for Christ’s sake, and for the sake of our people.” He understood that he was to keep alive the hope in Christ that was within them.

In this issue of the *Beacon* we will share testimonies from those willing to share from the legacy of goodness they received from their fathers. We hope this will cause you also to reflect on those who inspired you to look toward God.

We will also share articles meant

to draw your focus toward that mark from which our hope in Christ can be assured. The “aim” or “mark” for which God asks us to strive, is simply to uphold our relationship with him through protecting the spotlessness of our covenant with him. When, like a straight arrow, we remain “true” and “well-pointed” in our purpose and response, we remember him to whom we are pledged in a way that places us where eternal life is the reward. To “look beyond the mark” is to strive for that which is beyond the target of what God intends for us. Like a wobbling arrow that lands amiss, any aim beyond the intended target propels us away from the only mark with lasting merit.

Our desire is that you will know and remember this great Jehovah in whom we have placed our trust; that you will know him in your branches, during your prayer time, while you study the words of his prophets, and as you strive to move out in faith. †

*Note: Scripture references within the Beacon now include LDS numbering in order to assist all of our readers. As an example, when you see a scripture referenced as (2 Nephi 5:30/6:12), this indicates that “5:30” is found in RLDS numbering and “6:12” in LDS numbering.*

This issue of *The Beacon* was inspired by the themes of Jacob, Enos, Jarom and Omni. Join us as we work through the fifteen books of the Book of Mormon during the next few issues. If you would like to submit an article or a testimony, contact us at [beacon@conferenceofbranches.org](mailto:beacon@conferenceofbranches.org).

# Evidences of the Book of Mormon: Records

By Frank Evan Frye

When the Book of Mormon was written, a portion of the record was “sealed” and was to be withheld until a future date (see Church History 1:19). The Lord had a definite purpose in doing this, as he does in all his actions, such as trying the faith of his people.

And when they shall have received *this*, which is expedient that they should have *first*, to try their faith, and if it shall so be that they shall believe these things, then shall *the greater things* be made *manifest* unto them. And if it so be that they will not believe these things, then shall the *greater things* be *withheld* from them, unto their condemnation. Behold I was about to write them all which were engraven upon the plates of Nephi, but the Lord forbid it, saying, *I will try the faith of my people; therefore I, Mormon, do write the things which have been commanded me of the Lord* (3 Nephi 12:3–5/26:9–11, emphasis added).

## Less Than One Percent Known

Mormon states that he recorded *less than one “hundredth part”* of the things that Christ taught his people here in Joseph’s Land (3 Nephi 12:1/26:6–7). The reason we have such a small part in our hands is that the Lord is trying our faith, at this time. Would anyone venture a guess why it is, after more than a century and a half, that none of the “greater things” of that record have been revealed? It is evident that our faith is of a poor quality in the eyes of the Lord. If this were not so, surely the Lord would have revealed these records. Nearly a century and a half has passed since the translation of the Book of Mormon without the benefit of these greater records. How much more could have been done if these “greater things” had been available? Will the present generation of the Lord’s covenant people follow in their footsteps,

or will we have the courage and will to strengthen our faith to qualify for such a blessing?

The Lord has stated that if we accept and obey what he has already given, he will reveal more. Since he has not revealed any greater records, it seems that we have either ignored or rejected what he first gave. Ancient Israel rejected the Lord’s Word and the Lord spoke through his prophet Hosea and said:

**My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge; because thou hast rejected knowledge, I will also reject thee, that thou shalt be no priest to me; seeing thou hast forgotten the law of thy God, I will also forget thy children (Hosea 4:6).**

Shall we follow in their footsteps to destruction? Modern revelation gives a similar warning.

**And your minds in times past have been darkened because of unbelief, and because you have treated lightly the things you have received, which vanity and unbelief hath brought the whole church under condemnation. And this condemnation resteth upon the children of Zion, even all; and they shall remain under this condemnation until they repent and remember the new covenant, *even the Book of Mormon and the former commandments, which I have given them, not only to say, but to do according to that which is written, that they may bring forth fruit meet for their Father’s kingdom, otherwise there remaineth a scourge and a judgment to be poured out upon the children of Zion; for, shall the children of the kingdom pollute my holy land? Verily, I say unto you, Nay (D&C 83:8a–c/84:54–59, emphasis added).***

Surely, when we become good stewards over that which he has already given, he will begin to reveal the “greater things.” Let us examine some of the records which are yet to be revealed. Hopefully, in the near future, we may obtain some of them by reason of our faith.

## Many Books and Records to Come

In Helaman 2:12–14/3:13–16 there were “many books and many records” kept which dealt with nearly every aspect of their civilization. In 1 Nephi 2:93–99/9:2–5 a large set of records were kept by Nephi. Today, we have come to call them the Large Plates of Nephi. They contained the secular history of the Nephite kings from Nephi until the time of the judges in Alma’s day. Nephi and others call them “those plates.”

Nephi was also commanded to make a smaller set of records, which we have come to call the “Small Plates of Nephi.” Nephi and others called them, “these plates.” They contained much of the religious history of his people. Nephi gave them to his younger brother, Jacob, and they were passed down through his descendants until they were given to King Benjamin. In Mormon’s small explanatory note entitled “The Words of Mormon” (1:4–11, 17/1:3–7, 11), he explains that this small set of plates

was made for a “wise purpose.” Mormon explained that he chose to insert the Small Plates of Nephi after he had written the condensed version which was of the same historical time period and from the Large Plates of Nephi. At least part of the “wise purpose” for their existence became obvious when Martin Harris lost the 116 pages of manuscript that had been given through Joseph Smith, Jr. They covered the same time period and made it unnecessary to retranslate what had been lost.

The first five books of the Book of Mormon are the English translation of the Small Plates of Nephi. They are not an abridgment made by Mormon, but are written by Nephi’s “own hand,” and by Jacob and his descendants. Nephi had just left the Jerusalem of six hundred B.C. It is to be expected that his language and style of writing would have a different character than the rest of the Book of Mormon. This is in fact the case. For more information about the language patterns in the Book of Mormon, see the research on linguistics in *Recent Book of Mormon Developments* (published by Zarahemla Research Foundation, 1984, pp. 55–71). Of especial interest will be the articles entitled “Hebraisms in the Book of Mormon,” “Chiasms in the Book of Mormon,” and “Wordprints.”

Mormon, who lived four hundred years after Christ, abridged the rest of the book nearly one thousand years later. His son, Moroni, abridged the Book of Ether, which was the history of the Jaredites who had left the great tower after the language of many were confounded. Their history lasted more than two thousand years. Even though they lived in separate areas of the Book of Mormon lands, there is evidence of at least some contact with the Mulekites, who took in one of the injured Jaredite survivors (Coriantumr), as well as Ether, who wrote their history as recorded in the Book of Mormon.

## The Plates of Brass

Another record of great importance to the Lord is recorded on the Plates of Brass. There are a number of prophecies about the Plates of Brass. Nephi records the first promise about them:

**And now when my father saw all these things he was filled with the Spirit, and began to prophesy concerning his seed; that these plates of brass should go forth unto all nations, kindreds, tongues and people, who were of his seed. Wherefore he said that these plates of brass should never perish, neither should they be dimmed any more by time (1 Nephi 1:169–170/5:17–19).**

This book is to go forth to all nations. What a testimony that will be—the pure record of the Old Testament found in the New World! The validity of the Bible and the Book of Mormon will be beyond doubt. Mosiah 1:4–6/1:3–4 indicates that the Plates of Brass were written in the Egyptian language. This has led many people to believe in the possibility that the Plates of Brass contain

the original five books of Moses. Moses was reared and educated in the Pharaoh’s court, so it would be expected that he wrote in Egyptian. First Nephi 3:191–192/13:39–40 shares prophecy that “other books” are to come forth, which will establish the truth of the Bible. The Book of Mormon is probably one of these, but there are many others, and the Plates of Brass seem to head the list.

Alma 17:31–51/37:1–20 describes many details of the promises the Lord has given regarding the Plates of Brass. They are also preserved for a “wise purpose” so that God will be able to show “forth his power unto future generations.” This last phrase is repeated three times in only six verses. This will be an earth-shaking event that will rock the world with its importance.

## Other Records

Other records that are mentioned are: the Record of Lehi (1 Nephi 1:17/1:17) and the twenty-four Gold Plates that the people of Limhi found (Mosiah 5:64/8:9). The record that the Jaredites brought with them “across the great deep,” when their ancestors originally came from the land of the great tower, is mentioned in Ether 3:80/8:9. What did it contain? Could it possibly have been the Book of Remembrance which is mentioned in Genesis 6:5 (IV/JST)? In 1 Nephi 3:249–250/14:25–26, other records which “are sealed up to come forth in their purity . . . in the own due time of the Lord, unto the house of Israel” will be revealed.

In 2 Nephi 12:65–72/29:11–13 a prophecy is given about all of the tribes of Israel, and even all nations that have kept sacred records. All the records of these nations and tribes will be made known. There are some prophecies that are mentioned and sometimes quoted, which are probably contained in the Plates of Brass, but are not in our Bible. Some of these are the Parable of the Vineyard, by the prophet Zenos (Jacob 3:30–153/5:1–77) and the Prophecy of Zenock (Alma 16:189/33:17). It is quite impressive when we find very strong parallels between the writings of Zenos and one of the writers of the Dead Sea Scrolls.

A few of the many missing books of the Bible are: the Prophecy of Enoch (Jude 1:14); the Book of Jasher (Joshua 10:13); the Book of Gad the Seer (1 Chronicles 29:29); the Book of Jehu (2 Chronicles 20:34); and the Prophecy of Ahija (2 Chronicles 9:29). Many others could be listed as well.

## Seek, Ask and Knock

If we believe in a God who continually reveals his will to his people according to their faith, then we should do everything within our power to fortify our faith, so that we may become a part of his divine plan. If we seek, we will find; if we ask, it will be given to us; if we knock, it will be opened unto us. This is God’s promise to us. †

# Great Themes from Enos

By Kent Pedersen



Following are some great themes in Enos that expand our understanding of the purposes of the gifts of God to us.

## The Importance of Godly Parenting

Enos testifies that he became who he is because of the teachings of his father. We know that a just man will teach his children in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. This is as it should be, because from the beginning God has revealed himself especially to those who did not rebel, and who made an acceptable offering before him by presenting themselves as a living sacrifice transformed, renewed by the holy and perfect will of God (see Romans 12:1-2).

The sons of Helaman testified they had no fear of death and thought more on the liberty of their fathers than they did for their own lives, because of what their mothers had taught them: “Yea, they had been taught by their mothers, that if they did not doubt, that God would deliver them” (Alma 26:56/56:47). Having godly parents taught these young people the importance of a true belief in God. Actions and words were consistent, one with the other.

The children of Adam, our earthly father, began to call upon the name of the Lord, who blessed them and made all things known unto them (Genesis 4). “A book of remembrance was kept by as many as called upon God, and they were able to write by the Spirit of inspiration. From those words they were taught, having a language which was pure and undefiled” (Genesis 6:5-6). The righteous children of Adam were able to prove what the perfect will of God was, because they were taught by their parents and heeded their teachings.

Enos responded to that same, eternal Spirit of God; he was not rebellious. That same Spirit that his father possessed was passed on to him, and he in turn is passing it on to us. Consider the society in which we now live. How different would it be if we had godly fathers and mothers teaching their children? Many fall short of this distinction, but can still harbor great hope if their souls will hunger for eternal life, kneeling down before God in mighty prayer and supplication for their own souls. The promise in Enos is that God will bring a spirit of charity which knows no bounds, and a faith which is united with our forefathers, our brothers and our progenitors.

Sons and daughters born to godly parents have a connection that is not afforded to those who know not God.

*Without* God, nothing works well. *With* God, everything works for our good. Enos teaches us that godly parents instill within their children a faith and trust in God that will sustain them in adversities and times of peril (Helaman 2:74-75/5:12). There is no selfishness in considering the spiritual well-being of our own souls first. If we are not tethered to the Rock, we will drown along with those we are trying to save.

## Responding to God's Spirit in Faith, With Humility

As he was hunting in the forest, Enos was reminded of his father's words which caused his soul to stir. Because they had sunk deep into his heart, he tells us they caused his soul to hunger for their fuller meaning. He was moved to mighty prayer and supplication for his own soul, praying all day and into the night. Only then did he hear the voice say, "Enos, thy sins are forgiven thee...." Imagine the joy that filled his whole soul upon hearing those words from his heavenly Father, Lord and Redeemer.

Many are content to walk away from an experience such as this, thinking how wonderful to be forgiven or to be noticed in such a way. But Enos did not. He pressed on, recognizing that God could not lie. He must have known the voice of his God, for he did not wonder the truth spoken by it. With no assumption of being worthy himself, he asked, "Lord, how is it done?" His meaning is clear: "Why am I worthy of such a thing as this?" Enos did not doubt, for if God said it, then it must be true. He reasoned that if God could be this magnificent to him, could he not be the same for his brethren? Thus, we see the purpose of creation in Enos—to be an instrument of righteousness for God; to be of service to his fellow man.

Enos was told that his sins were forgiven because of his *faith in Christ*, whom he had neither heard nor seen. Our ability to communicate primarily comes from hearing, not seeing. Faith also comes by hearing (Romans 10:16). Enos listened; he did not harden his heart. Firmly established in the faithfulness of his God, he began to pursue the welfare of his brethren and others. And why should he not do this? His sins were forgiven because of his faith. He was redeemed beyond what was his due. In this most wonderful state of forgiveness, his heart cried out for the same to be given to others. He understood that the purpose of redemption is not for self alone.

## Remission of Sin Does Not Come Easily

In our bumper sticker society, mankind grasps for sound-bites instead of sound doctrine. Enos, on the other hand, testifies of the wrestle he had before God before he received a remission of his sins. He instinctively realized that God wants his people to search for him. It is God's glory to hide up a thing; it is man's honor to search it out (Proverbs 25:2). Our world yearns for the deep things of God, but is not willing to endure the struggle, the effort, to obtain them. Jesus spoke of such a thing when he told his disciples why he spoke in parables (Matthew 13:8-12). God wants us to rely on him, not man. Abraham had the faith to take Isaac to the altar before he saw the ram in the bush. Jacob refused to relent in his wrestle with the angel until the angel "touched the hollow of his thigh," which ended the struggle. God wants us to rely *wholly* upon his Spirit, which is why he tells us in latter-day revelation we are to do many things of our own free will, because the power—*his* power—is within us (D&C 58:6d/27-28). When we labor under the godly power within us, we labor in righteousness.

Our drive-by society also teaches one to think that a request for forgiveness is as simple as ordering a quickly prepared meal. One offers a hasty prayer and then wonders why he is not immediately blessed. The idea of having one's sins *remitted*, or pardoned, is not often seen as a life-changing event—something that requires more than casually saying, "I am sorry." Yet, Enos understands this principle and teaches us. If we, too, hope to receive such a pardon, then we must recognize what Enos is teaching in its deepest sense.

Alma was rebellious in trying to destroy the church of God; nevertheless, God sent an angel who spoke to him with such power that he was left dumb and immobilized for two days! The angel mentioned Alma's father, also named Alma, in his speech. Again, we have testimony about the impact made by the prayers of a just father. The daily path which Alma walked after his conversion stands as a testimony to those who have come behind him. For the rest of his life, he walked in faithfulness. His partners, Am-

**When we labor  
under the godly power  
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ulek, Ammon, Aaron, Omni, Himni, et al, gave up all their inheritances in order to serve God, this being in response to the majesty, mercy and grace that he had showed them as well. The converted people of Ammon, the anti-Nephi-Lehi's, recognized that a remission of sins could cost them their lives, yet, they were willing to pay such a price to retain that remission and perhaps win others to Jesus Christ.

## A Hungering and Humble Soul Kneels Before His Maker

Enos testifies that a hungry soul is one that greatly desires something. When he knelt in prayer, he was not aware what awaited him. However, he knew that what he wanted was important enough for him to offer that prayer. He cried mightily, not necessarily with tears and a quivering voice, but most assuredly with intensity and great wrenching of personal pride, convenience, complacency and self-satisfaction. Enos wanted the “eternal life and the joy of the saints” of which his father often spoke. He knew his father possessed it. He knew his soul hungered for it. He knew the only place for him to get it was on his knees before his Maker!

In the book *The Insanity of God*, by Nik Ripken, there is a story about a murderous man who had killed many non-Muslims, thinking he was doing God a favor by doing so. He had a recurring dream where in it he saw himself trying to wash the blood from his hands. Every time he washed them clean, the blood instantly returned. The dream weighed on him until he cried out, “How do I get this blood off my hands?” A personage answered, telling him the only way to be washed clean was through Jesus. Find Jesus, he was told, and he would be made clean through his blood. The words were so intense that he was driven to his knees to ask how he could find this Jesus. When he found Jesus, he also found great satisfaction in pursuing him. Even in the face of having his family killed by the kind of people that he once was, he found Jesus to be worthy!

King Lamoni's father was ready to kill his own son. Ammon smote him to the ground. With Ammon's sword at his throat, this man pled for his life to be spared. He was told he would be spared only if he released Ammon's brothers from prison and

if he promised not to kill his son, thus letting him retain his kingdom. Readily agreeing, King Lamoni's father was then allowed to go free. When he returned to his kingdom, he met Aaron, who taught him the Record of Heaven. The king told Aaron that he would gladly give away all his sins to know this God of whom Ammon and Aaron spoke. Aaron told him that if he truly desired such a thing, he must bow before God, repent of all his sins, and call on Christ's name in faith, believing he would receive. If he did those things, he would receive the hope he desired. The king bowed down on his knees before the Lord, and as he had been taught, offered to give away all of his sins.

Enos teaches us that the way to seek remission of sins is by bowing down before God and seeking him diligently. God knows that guilt is a function of the Holy Spirit as it convicts us of our sinfulness and brings us to God. Shame, on the other hand, is a tool that the adversary uses to bind us and make us feel unworthy of God's great and everlasting mercy. When the voice told Enos his sins were forgiven, there was no more need of convicting the sinner, because the sinner recognized, repented and sought the Lord.

## Being Made Whole Will Bring about Charity

Enos testifies to us that after receiving a remission of sins, one's thoughts are then filled with charity and desire for others. Just as Enos prayed immediately after the voice came to him, a truly repentant soul will seek for the welfare of others. No longer can selfish or sanctimonious attitudes be the clothing that one will want to wear. From now on, the only satisfactory wardrobe will be the robes of righteousness, being woven with the bonds of charity—the pure love of Jesus Christ—and with humility interlaced in the garment of repentance. One's hopes, having once been of selfish desire, are now focused on the welfare of others' souls, even one's own enemies (Matthew 5:45-46)!

## The Result of True Belief in God

Enos teaches us the way of true servanthood to God. One cannot be happy in the Lord as long as eternal death and destruction await those who do not know God. A convicted and converted believer in the miraculous and magnificent Jesus and his Father will not be satisfied in knowing that his own salvation is assured. Nor will he rest until he has done what he can to teach others to have faith in God. †

**The king told Aaron that he would gladly give away all his sins to know this God of whom Ammon and Aaron spoke.**

## Inaction, Unbelief and Doubt

# Does Your Submarine Have a Screen Door?

By Mike Hancock

Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the things which God hath prepared for them that love him. But God hath revealed them unto us by his Spirit; for the Spirit searcheth all things, yea, the deep things of God. For what man knoweth the things of a man, save the spirit of man which is in him? Even so the things of God knoweth no man, except he has the Spirit of God. Now we have received, not the spirit of the world, but the Spirit which is of God; that we might know the things that are freely given to us of God. Which things also we speak, not in the words which man's wisdom teacheth, but which the Holy Ghost teacheth; comparing spiritual things with spiritual. But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God; for they are foolishness unto him; neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned. But he that is spiritual judgeth all things, yet he himself is judged of no man. For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But we have the mind of Christ (1 Corinthians 2:9-16).

## Beyond Belief— Exercising with Faith

BELIEF is an opinion or a judgment in which a person is fully persuaded. A belief is something we feel very confident in. As an example, I believe that China is a nation. That belief, however, has little bearing on my daily life.

FAITH *begins* with belief, but that belief must be multiplied by action and by confidence. Faith requires action in a way that daily impacts our lives. Because faith relies on confidence and action to live, its existence is demonstrable. Consider these words from James:

**What profit is it, my brethren, for a man to say he hath faith, and hath not works? Can faith save him? Yea, a man may say, I will show thee I have faith without works; but I say, show me thy faith without works, and I will show thee my faith by my works. For if a brother or sister be naked and destitute, and one of you say, Depart in peace, be warmed and filled; notwithstanding he give not those things which are needful to the body; what profit is your faith unto such? Even so faith, if it have not works is dead, being alone. Therefore wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead and cannot save you? (James 2:14-18).**

Singer Rich Mullens illustrates it another way. In the song *Screen Door* he says faith without works is as useless as a screen door on a submarine. He is correct in saying that without works, we are without faith, which can also be expressed as *unbelief* multiplied by *inaction* and *doubt*. To possess faith, we must do the opposite.

With faith, we have to make sure our belief is placed

in genuine truth and not in partial truths. We find that particular kind of truth in the word of God. If you want to be certain that authentic faith is being exercised in your life, then make sure you are taking action, or making changes, in relation to truth. Consider the truth of who God is—his character after which we are to model our own:

- He was God before the world was created; he is unchanging, with no variableness to his nature.
- He is merciful and gracious.
- He is truth and cannot lie.
- He is no respecter of persons.
- He is love.

CONFIDENCE is trust that is based on knowledge and experience. Sometimes it is the testimonies of others that increases our confidence. When we believe the truth with enough confidence to act, we demonstrate faith. If you want to know whether your faith is growing, or is being exercised in your life, check whether you are making changes in your priorities. In other words, examine where you are placing your focus and your desires.

We each have the same 1,440 minutes in every day, but a person possessed of faith will be a person whose confidence leads them to take action. Scripture gives us some counsel on how our actions should be prioritized:

**Therefore take no thought, saying, What shall we eat? or, What shall we drink? or, Wherewithal shall we be clothed? Why is it that ye murmur among yourselves, saying, We cannot obey thy word because ye have not all these things, and seek to excuse yourselves, saying that, After all these things do the Gentiles seek. Behold, I say unto you, that your heavenly Father knoweth that ye have need of all**

these things. Wherefore, seek not the things of this world but seek ye first to build up the kingdom of God, and to establish his righteousness, and all these things shall be added unto you (Matthew 6:35-38).

## Faith to Our Heavenly Father

One of the reasons we gather in worship is because of our faith. In 1834 the *Lectures on Faith* were written as part of a curriculum developed for the School of the Prophets in Kirtland, Ohio. They were later included in the 1835 Doctrine and Covenants. In these we learn that faith is the reason for all action. Lecture 1:10 states: “If men were duly to consider themselves, and turn their thoughts and reflections to the operations of their own minds, they would readily discover that it is faith, and faith only, which is the moving cause of all action in them; that without it, both mind and body would be in a state of inactivity, and all their exertions would cease, both physical and mental.”

Faith is also a principle of power as demonstrated in Christ’s words to his disciples: “Then came the disciples to Jesus apart, and said, ‘Why could not we cast him out?’ and Jesus said unto them, Because of your unbelief; for, verily, I say unto you, If ye have faith as a grain of mustard seed, ye shall say unto this mountain, Remove to yonder place, and it shall remove; and nothing shall be impossible unto you” (Matthew 17:19-20).

In the fifth chapter of Ether we are given many examples of faith:

**And it came to pass that Ether did prophesy great and marvelous things unto the people, which they did not believe, because they saw them not. And now I, Moroni, would speak somewhat concerning these things; I would shew unto the world that faith is things which are hoped for and not seen; Wherefore, dispute not because ye see not, for ye receive no witness until after the trial of your faith, for it was by faith that Christ shewed himself unto our fathers, after he had risen from the dead; And he shewed not himself unto them, until after they had faith in him; wherefore, it must needs be that some had faith in him, for he shewed himself not unto the world. But because of the faith of men, he has shewn himself unto the world, and glorified the name of the Father, and prepared a way that thereby others might be partakers of the heavenly gift, that they might hope for those things which they have not seen; Wherefore ye may also have hope, and be partakers of the gift, if ye will but have faith.**

Behold, it was by faith that they of old were called after the holy order of God; wherefore, by faith was the Law of Moses given. But in the gift of his Son, hath God prepared a more excellent way, and it is by faith that it hath been fulfilled; For if there be no faith among the children of men, God can do no miracle among them; wherefore he shewed not himself until after their faith. Behold, it was the faith

of Alma and Amulek that caused the prison to tumble to the earth. Behold, it was the faith of Nephi and Lehi, that wrought the change upon the Lamanites, that they were baptized with fire and with the Holy Ghost. Behold, it was the faith of Ammon and his brethren, which wrought so great a miracle among the Lamanites; yea, and even all they who wrought miracles, wrought them by faith, even those who were before Christ, and also them who were after. And it was by faith that the three disciples obtained a promise that they should not taste of death; and they obtained not the promise until after their faith. And neither at any time hath any wrought miracles until after their faith; wherefore they first believed in the Son of God.

And there were many whose faith was so exceeding strong even before Christ came, who could not be kept from within the vail, but truly saw with their eyes the things which they had beheld with an eye of faith, and they were glad. And behold we have seen in this record, that one of these was the Brother of Jared; for so great was his faith in God, that when God put forth his finger, he could not hide it from the sight of the Brother of Jared, because of his word which he had spoken unto him, which word he had obtained by faith (Ether 5:5-20/12:5-20).

We see that by faith the law of Moses was given, that the gift of salvation was offered, that prison walls tumbled, that the hearts of others were changed, that men obtained promises such as never tasting of death, and that a man saw with his own eyes the finger of God.

Lecture on Faith 1:22 states it this way: “We here understand that the sacred writers say that all these things were done by faith. It was by faith that the worlds were framed—God spake, chaos heard, and worlds came into order, by reason of the faith there was in Him. So with man also—he spake by faith in the name of God, and the sun stood still, the moon obeyed, mountains removed, prisons fell, lions’ mouths were closed, the human heart lost its enmity, fire its violence, armies their power, the sword its terror, and death its dominion; and all this by reason of the faith which was in them. Had it not been for the faith which was in man, they might have spoken to the sun, the moon, the mountains, prisons, lions, the human heart, fire, armies, the sword, or to death in vain! Faith then, is the first great governing principle which has power, dominion, and authority over all things!”

How do we exercise that faith in our Heavenly Father?

First, we believe that God exists. Secondly, we have a correct understanding of his character—his perfections, his attributes and who he really is. Thirdly, we have a knowledge that the life that we are living is in agreement with God’s will. Without these three, our faith is unproductive.

In summary, the definition of faith is belief + action + confidence. We are to distance ourselves from the opposite, which is unbelief+doubt+inaction. We do not want to keep placing screen doors on a submarine. †



# All He Wants is Our Hearts

*By David Whiting*

Something dwelling on my heart for quite some time is the yearning we have within the body of Christ to do and to have things that require a discipline and a focus that we can't quite seem to manage. It has been a constant prayer for me to address issues such as unity, our focus in worship, discipline within our lives, and, frankly, how we spend our time and our energy. Several months ago, the Lord told me to sit down and write. I would like to share some of the thoughts and ideas given to me as help regarding the challenges we have in these last days.

## Who/What Will Unify the People?

The first thought the Lord shared with me, since my prayers began, was an understanding of unity. The responsibility to establish unity throughout his church is not ours; that responsibility lies with him. This is *his* church. To establish unity in the way that he will, in the timing that he will, using methods and approaches of his design, may be at odds with the way we think things should be done. When we, in our own wisdom, take things upon ourselves, we run ahead of the Lord.

Our command, as a body, is *to create the conditions from which individual covenants with God can be established, nurtured and flourish*. As God revealed, when two or more persons are fully engaged in personal covenant with God, "I will bless them, and through me, unity will exist." Personal covenant first, relationship with God next, and then *unity through God* can occur.

In contemplating the challenge we have to establish the conditions where individual covenants can occur and be reinforced, I pondered what is present within our branches. Like the review of our health we receive when visiting a doctor, we need a similar health-check within our branches. From what is revealed in our branch snapshot, we can, for example, make adjustments in how and what we teach, apply renewed effort in our ministries, or extend hospitality and friendship—all things which were vibrant in the ministry of Christ which is our best model for his church.

## Growing in a Healthy Branch

If we look at the characteristics of a healthy branch, there should be four noticeable aspects:

First, our branches should be a place for seekers. These are those that may not yet understand the love of Jesus; who have, as the Book of Mormon describes, simply the desire to believe. Our branches should be a place where seekers can hear and witness the love of Jesus, and then have opportunity to make their own, personal covenant.

Second, our branches should teach and feed new members; those newly covenanted with God. Opportunity should exist for them to learn what it means to be a disciple of Jesus Christ. These are typically high energy individuals—exuberant in their recent conversion and excited about the possibilities of a life with Jesus.

With newly covenanted members, we must find ways to encourage, use and maximize the contributions they can offer, as well as provide a place where they can continue to grow.

Third, we must have a place where longer time members can be taught to understand obedience to God’s commands and encouraged to embrace them in the spirit of joy from which they were given. This is important. We cannot ignore the commandments we have been given simply because they are inconvenient or difficult. We must have saints within our midst that are performing this role—ones that will quality check, if you will, and both challenge and uplift us to immerse ourselves in the worthiest response possible. The events we host, the acts we perform, the sacraments we do—we must assure all these are in compliance with God’s directives, not overlooking what will harm or limit the body.

Fourth, all branches need to have a place where those that are living in full covenant with God, who could be termed fully righteous, can flourish. We know from scriptures in Genesis that in Enoch’s city they had conditions where they were fully righteous. When we read the description of what that city was like, it sounds glorious! We need to find a way within our branches to have that be possible.

If we are going to have the full spectrum of response by people attending our branches, each of these people groups must be found among us; must be accepted, nurtured and helped to mature with love and attentiveness.

### Living in the Presence of God

I do not want you to think of these four branch attributes in terms of progression. Instead, let us think in terms of concentric circles, where God is in the center. Depending on where we are in our discipleship and personal covenant with God, we can endure the presence of God in greater or lesser degrees. Those that are seeking are on the periphery. They first hear of having a covenant with God; they yearn and are encouraged to obtain that relationship with him, they then begin changing their life. As they grow in their response to God, they can endure his presence more and more.

We know those attending our branches have many shortcomings and strengths, so the challenge as leaders is to create an environment where all of those attending can develop, flourish and contribute to the life of the body. Oftentimes Christians who are preach-

ing the gospel of salvation limit themselves to answering primarily how Jesus can improve the life they are living. This focus on things that are worldly, that are built around the things of human existence, is not what Jesus taught in his ministry with the gospel of the kingdom. Every Restoration group from the Joseph Smith, Jr. era has a common awareness, and that is the understanding of the calling to build up the Kingdom of God here on the earth; not just to preach the salvation of Jesus Christ, but to bring focus to the gospel of the kingdom as Jesus put it every time he was asked. Our challenge, as the Lord shared with me, is to create the environment where the individual covenant of every disciple can be established, nurtured, and flourish. Through that process, we can begin to see unity exist. If, in that united environment, we can give over our hearts, we will succeed. There is no greater sacrifice we can make than to comprehend fully our covenants and develop a relationship with God.

### A Picture of How We Might Be Doing

Our encouragement of new members seems to fall short. A lot of Saints who have been baptized as adults share that many of the histories, behaviors and things we do as common practice are not very well understood by them. It takes a while before they begin to feel like they are fully integrated when they come into the church as adults. Perhaps we could do better at explaining and contrasting between doctrine, traditions and nonsense.

In terms of our obedience, when too much time and energy are spent talking about whether something is or is not being done the right way, it becomes a drudgery to endurance. We allow too many discussions to consume our dialogue or worship experiences. When they become the end result of what we do when we are together, we have missed the opportunity not only for worship, but the opportunity for unity because we cannot develop full, personal, individual covenants by simply following steps in a procedure.

When new members are observing what they need to do and how they need to perform, they *do* need to know the steps and understand the purpose behind them. But as they mature in their grasp of these things, that understanding needs to transform into “I am performing this ordinance with the full awareness of what the Lord intended.” I guarantee that the serv-

**This focus on things that are worldly, that are built around the things of human existence, is not what Jesus taught in his ministry with the gospel of the kingdom.**

ing of communion takes on a completely different role in this context. When priests are visiting the homes of the people, or when they are offering us the sacrament, they should be able to look into your eyes and say, “I know what you are suffering—what you are struggling with, and I offer you the love of Jesus to heal your wounds.” It is no longer just an obedient act being carried out in the correct way because they have come to understand the process and the intent the Lord had and therefore carry out those actions as a result of that understanding.

Interestingly, even obedience does not get us to the place where we are fully righteous with God to the degree we are prepared for his kingdom. Part of the reason we are struggling with a lack of unity is because we are unable to get beyond the steps of process and procedure. Why is that? Genesis tells us “the children of men were numerous upon all the face of the land. And in those days, Satan had great dominion among men, and raged in their hearts; and from thenceforth came wars and bloodshed. And a man’s hand was against his own brother in administering death, because of secret works, seeking for power” (6:13-14).

It is all about *power*; about satan’s attempt to try to get within our hearts and encourage us to seek and develop power on our own; power that can be exercised over others. All God wants is our heart! It is difficult to give your heart to Jesus and then turn around and say you want to have power over your brother or sister. It is difficult to hold a grudge when you do not seek power over your brother or sister. It is difficult to have hard feelings about someone when you are willing to yield power to God. Many of the things we do, sadly, focus on trying to assimilate power. When we strive to be obedient to God and the processes he has specified in his commands, we can find ourselves accidentally accumulating power that we are not entitled to. We need to examine our hearts and seek ways to release the desire for power.

During a recent conference in the United States, there were many discussions in which people expressed worry about the condition of the Saints. The Lord has continued to share with me a couple of things, one of which is that we should stop expending energy to recreate past successes. We need to purify. The origin of all mankind’s failures lie in sin and disobedience, which has been consistent across time. Just as the blessings and promises of scripture are timeless when you yield your will fully to God, the challenges that will

occupy our efforts in the future will require renewed dedication, increased vigilance and a more aggressive application of kingdom principles if we are to thwart the ever-increasing work of the adversary to draw people away from God. If we want our branches to help ourselves and others become fully actualized in our covenant with God, we must have a place where we can obtain understanding of kingdom principles; a place where they are encouraged and taught.

The challenge before the Saints, for which we are largely unprepared, is that we all desire to serve; all want to see God’s kingdom—that Zion described with Enoch’s city:

**And the Lord said unto Enoch, As I live, even so will I come in the last days, in the days of wickedness and vengeance, to fulfill the oath which I made unto you concerning the children of Noah. And the day shall come that the earth shall rest. But before that day ... a veil of darkness shall cover the earth; and the heavens shall shake, and also the earth. And great tribulations shall be among the children of men, but my people will I preserve; and righteousness will I send down out of the earth, to bear testimony of mine Only Begotten ... to sweep the earth as with a flood, to gather out mine own elect from the four quarters of the earth, unto a place which I shall prepare; an holy city, that my people may gird up their loins, and be looking forth for the time of my coming; for there shall be my tabernacle, and it shall be called Zion; a New Jerusalem. And the Lord said unto Enoch, Then shalt thou and all thy city meet them there; and we will receive them into our bosom; and they shall see us, and we will fall upon their necks, and they shall fall upon our necks, and we will kiss each other; And there shall be mine abode (Genesis 7:67-72).**

Is this what you want to be part of? Are you willing to focus all of your energy and time preparing to be part of it? If not, I fear you will not be ready.

If you have a desire to work; to fully covenant with God anew and allow his spirit to lead you to places only angels know, he will provide you with all the instruments of faith you need to accomplish his work.

May the Lord bless us as we sincerely examine our branches, their health and the challenges we have to develop an environment where all can flourish and build and nourish their covenants with God! †

**It is difficult to give your heart to Jesus and then turn around and say you want to have power over your brother or sister.**

# A Firm Hope and a Faithful Response

## Is This Your Story?

*Spokesmen (Patriarchs Fred Greene, Neil Simmons, Jerry Vickery)*

Many of us were raised in families whose roots extend into the beginning days of the work initiated through Joseph Smith, Jr. Indeed, some among us can trace their lineage to Christian leaders from even earlier times. Our bookshelves and file cabinets include stories, teachings and testimonies of many who have passed on, witnessing that in each generation God has revealed himself to us. Indeed, he speaks still, counseling us to pull ourselves upright, to respond in service to one another, and promising to bless those who will hear him.

This article presents only a portion of the instruction given by patriarchs to conferences of Saints assembled in 2016 and 2017 (the fuller revelations are available in printable format from either our website or the JCRB office). As testimony of our faith in the words received, there must be follow-through; action on our part. What have you done with the counsel received? Have you discussed it in your homes and branches? Like Nephi of old, determined to follow instruction from the Lord, what plans of action have you set in motion? We ask and the Lord speaks. These are just some of many words given to many, meant to help awaken the hope within us. Let us pledge ourselves to faithfulness in our response. †

<b>“Go and Do” Instructions</b>	<b>Addressed to</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
Utilize the Aaronic priesthood!	Branches	Fred
Aaronic priesthood is to visit families and teach them to pray and study in their homes; teach them stewardship; prayerfully lift them up and support them.	Aaronic	Fred
Strengthen congregations and re-invigorate their spirits. Lift the faith of the people unto me.	Elders	Fred
Priesthood must obey commandments regarding stewardship and tithing.	Priesthood	Fred
All Saints must obey laws of stewardship. The spiritual endowment cannot be given until my Saints are more obedient to laws of stewardship.	Saints	Fred
Seek to bring forth and establish the cause of Zion (if you do not respond, I will raise up another people!).	Saints	Fred
Witness to others the renewed call to Zionic principles. The doors should be open to ALL who desire to join in the work.	Saints	Fred
Strengthen your love for one another and for me. Such are my people!	Saints	Fred
Remain faithful; if you are faithful to my words, I will perform a marvelous work that shall turn hearts away from division and to a desire to be united as a body in faith.	Saints	Fred
All those who desire to be engaged in the marvelous work that is about to come forth should be strengthened (through repentance), united (in your faith) and prepared (to be joyful witnesses).	Saints	Fred
Prophecies (warning of coming events) are being fulfilled. My people must be prepared and united in faith and strength that they may overcome and be joyful witnesses before the world.	Saints	Fred
Have humility (contrite spirits, etc.).	Saints	Neil
Have reverence.	Saints	Neil
Have love/kindness (bridle your tongues; cease contention). Love each other AND God.	Saints	Neil

<b>“Go and Do” Instructions</b>	<b>Addressed to</b>	<b>Speaker</b>
Have no other gods (pleasure/power/pride). Put these aside. HE is the head of this church.	Saints	Neil
Teach covenants; know the promises and blessings.	Saints	Neil
Read and study the scriptures (without this, you have no knowledge, wisdom, living water, nor are a source for spiritual growth).	Saints	Neil
Be unified (no division or separation between you). My true servants are those who seek to bind up the wounds, heal the divisions and bring unity. Those who sow division are agents of the adversary, who delights in contention.	Saints	Neil
Be doers of the work. As you give heed to these words, more shall be revealed.	Saints	Neil
Teach all the ordinances, the laws, the counsels, and the stewardship responsibilities	Saints	Neil
Fill God’s house with tithes and offerings!!! Be obedient in your stewardship.	Saints	Neil
Prepare for God’s kingdom NOW!	Saints	Neil
I have called upon all those in my church to organize themselves. I have given them patterns to follow that all things may be done in order.	Saints	Jerry
I am calling on you to put away from yourselves those prideful traditions which have arisen among you which cause you to believe you are the only true members of my church. I have raised up my church among other groups from among the tribes of Israel and given them keys and patterns of organization to follow, just as I have given unto you. Each of those groups has a different role to perform in that great gathering.	Saints	Jerry
Beware of counterfeits raised up by men and devils which bypass all the requirements of my law by which men authoritatively enter my church.	Saints	Jerry
I am giving you a specific office work to perform in this great gathering. That work will require repentance, a greater openness to my Spirit and a greater adherence to the provisions of my law which I have caused to be written and presented to this portion of my church since 1828. In recent years I have given you directions to follow that will bring you out of erroneous traditions and into the office work which I require of you. Continue in those directions and the blessings which have come, anticipating that you will more fully understand those directions as you implement them in days to come.	Saints	Jerry
You need have no fear because of events occurring in the world around you if you will heed my word to you.	Saints	Jerry

Behold, great and marvelous are the works of the Lord. How unsearchable are the depths of the mysteries of him; and it is impossible that man should find out all his ways. And no man knoweth of his ways, save it be revealed unto him; wherefore, brethren, despise not the revelations of God. For behold, by the power of his word, man came upon the face of the earth; which earth was created by the power of his word (Jacob 3:9-12/3:8-9).

# Exploring Isaiah with Avraham Gileadi

By Barbra Jordison

In the Book of Mormon, Jesus commanded us to “search [the book of Isaiah] diligently ... For surely he spake as touching all things concerning my people which are of the house of Israel ... And all things that he spake, hath been, and shall be, even according to the words which he spake” (3 Nephi 10:27-29/23:1-3).

What hidden messages are revealed in Isaiah’s writings that are intended for latter-day readers? What can we learn about those whose destiny is linked with the House of Israel and about the fate planned for those who do and do not have covenants with God? Studying the Hebrew text of Isaiah with Avraham Gileadi can solidly answer these questions, and both terrify and inspire students interested in preparing themselves for the unfolding events of the last days. The catch? You must endure the study!

While Gileadi’s book *Isaiah Decoded* will describe latter-day events and relationships in great detail, it does not reveal clearly how Isaiah delivers his unique message. This is likely due to the complexity inherent in deciphering Isaiah’s message as a whole. It is through Gileadi’s analytical commentary (audio narrative found at [www.Isaiah-Explained.com](http://www.Isaiah-Explained.com)) and *Windows on the Prophecy of Isaiah* (study tools) that confidence in his interpretation grows.

Explained.com) and *Windows on the Prophecy of Isaiah* (study tools) that confidence in his interpretation grows.

## Who is Avraham Gileadi?

Gileadi was born in the Netherlands during World War II.<sup>1</sup> During the war, his father’s Dutch underground organization helped a New Zealand pilot escape to England. This led to the family emigrating to New Zealand in 1950. In 1968, Gileadi emigrated to Israel, where he became fluent in Hebrew, attended rabbinical school, and studied Jewish analytical methods. He said that “Judaism attracted me because of the unique manner in which the Jews view the Law and the Prophets. Among the Jews, I felt a depth of understanding that, as a Gentile, I had not hitherto known.” While visiting a library in Israel, a librarian handed him a copy of the Book of Mormon and suggested he read it. Gileadi took the book to be polite and studied it out of curiosity. As he read, he realized it contained a testimony of Jesus Christ which mirrored his own. He later joined the LDS church. From Brigham

Section 1 Relates to Isaiah’s Day		Opposing Themes		Section 2 Relates to the Last Days	
Parallel Ideas (opposites to Section 2)	Isaiah Chapters	From Section 1	From Section 2	Parallel Ideas (opposites to Section 1)	Isaiah Chapters
1a	1-5	Ruin	Rebirth	1b	34-35
2a	6-8	Rebellion	Compliance	2b	36-40
3a	9-12	Punishment	Deliverance	3b	41-46
4a	13-23	Humiliation	Exaltation	4b	47
5a	24-27	Suffering	Salvation	5b	48-54
6a	28-31	Disloyalty	Loyalty	6b	55-59
7a	32-33	Disinheritance	Inheritance	7b	60-66

Young University he graduated with several degrees, including a Ph.D. in Hebrew Bible and Ancient Near Eastern Studies. For his doctoral thesis (1981), Gileadi's mentor suggested he explore the Dead Sea Scroll text of Isaiah (the oldest known text of Isaiah other than what is contained in the Book of Mormon). While Professor Robert Brownlee originally noted the presence of a seven-part division and parallel blocks of chapters in the scroll of Isaiah, it was Gileadi's analysis of the complex literary structure that radically impacted the book's interpretation.

During a decade of postdoctoral research, Gileadi also worked with the Hebrew Masoretic Text, the Dead Sea Scroll of Isaiah, and the Septuagint to provide a translation of the Book of Isaiah intelligible in English that remains true to the Hebrew.

## Hebrew Literary Devices

For those who understand ancient Hebrew literary devices, they reveal a message within a message, even a hidden message. How simple or complex the message, how shallow or profound, is up to its author. Since knowledge of ancient Hebrew writing styles was largely unknown until the 1900s, the prophecies of Isaiah would today remain largely hidden were it not for the dedication of Gileadi. Using lexical tools, he worked to capture every nuance of meaning from the original Hebrew. Each time Gileadi uncovered something new within the text, it was rigorously examined against the entire book of Isaiah to validate its meaning. Were it not for his persistent examination followed by books and lectures, Gileadi's insight into Isaiah might have remained known only in scholarly circles, denying students of Scripture significant keys for unlocking Isaiah's hidden messages.

## One Way Isaiah Employs Literary Devices to Convey Meaning

As Gileadi explains, the general arrangement of Isaiah's chapters sets the stage for how themes flow through Isaiah. The 66 chapters are organized in two sections, each broken into seven parallel parts. Each section forms a complete chiasm within itself, with one section emphasizing outcomes opposite that of the other section (see chart on previous page).

In the first section, Isaiah draws from select events happening in his day and uses them as types for specific events that will unfold in the last days. In Section 1, the themes form a chiasm when "ruin" is read as a state of "disinheritance;" "rebellion" as a state of "disloyalty;" "punishment" as a state of "suffering" and with "humiliation" as the central point accentuated by each of these. Section 2 is arranged similarly. When we compare Sections 1 and 2, we see opposing themes with "ruin" as the opposite of "rebirth;" "suffering" as the opposite of "salvation" and so on, also revealing a way to read Isaiah other than chronologically.

Also evident within this seven-part structure are code names for peoples who participate in the end-time scenario. For instance, "Israel" can also be read to specifically apply to America (established as a "people of God"), as can "Egypt." Isaiah pleads with this latter-day "Israel" (America) to observe God's perpetual law (covenant terms). He reminds them that the same wickedness which brought calamity to ancient Israel will prevail in latter-day America. This calamity is described as a "covenant

curse" or condition brought by ignoring covenant terms and therefore those under the curse being denied covenant protection.

In the type/shadow context, what invited horrors upon ancient Israel will happen also to America (her spiritual fall will precede her physical fall). From Isaiah 19:2-3, Gileadi explains the type for end-time America that Isaiah sets forth: "Egypt anciently had a reputation as the most powerful nation in the world, though it dwelt geographically apart. It was religious, had a stable political system, and was highly productive in industry and agriculture. By Isaiah's time, when ruled by a black pharaoh, it perilously declined, growing so corrupt and weakened that a spirit of anarchy took over and the land turned to ruin: 'I will stir up the Egyptians against the Egyptians; they will fight brother against brother and neighbor against neighbor, city against city and state against state. Egypt's spirit will be drained from within; I will frustrate their plans, and they will resort to the idols and spiritists.'" Explaining further, Gileadi says in a future rerun of past events, we can expect to see Egypt's inhabitants do evil, choose idols, become spiritually estranged from God, their economy crash, civil war sweep the land, their politicians take matters into their own hands, leaders mislead the nation, and God empower the king of Assyria against them.<sup>2</sup>

## Key Players Revealed by Isaiah

Within Isaiah's prophecy, Gileadi also identifies two key, opposing players: a tyrant and a servant. While each of these serve to bring about God's plan (either bringing blessing or judgment), they are opposites in every sense.

Interestingly the servant's mission is to respond first, and then to prepare others. The servant, a latter-day prophet whom Isaiah calls Righ-

<b>Tyrant</b>	<b>Servant</b>
<b>Strikes nations</b>	<b>Allows nations to feel God's saving arm</b>
<b>Subjugates</b>	<b>Purifies the nations the nations</b>
<b>Causes havoc and destruction</b>	<b>Causes peace and healing</b>
<b>Keeps people in bondage</b>	<b>Releases people from bondage</b>
<b>Exalts himself</b>	<b>Is the lowliest of men (Exalts God)</b>
<b>Exiled to hell</b>	<b>Returns from exile (and returns those who were exiled)</b>

teousness, is a charismatic spokesman prophesied to perform a remarkable list of tasks in order to encourage covenant awareness and faithfulness in the last days. Probably the most fascinating character described by Isaiah, this servant is sent to prepare the way for things to succeed according to God's plan. He intercedes from among God's people, to help them and those who might still become God's people. He is prepared by God, and sent forth by God to shed clarity (light) on the greatest invitation ever issued: to love and be loved. His intervention is what will enable many of us to cross over from being merely "believers in God and in truth" to being "alive with God and with truth." If we will respond to his ministry and embrace the efforts needed to change our focus and commitment to God, our lives and our testimonies will, like Christ's, magnify the Father. Based on how we respond, this can see us elevated to the level described by Isaiah as "sons and daughters."

In many ways this servant can be likened unto the Messiah, and yet he is not called the Messiah by either Isaiah or Gileadi. Even though all who assume roles to save and elevate others ultimately typify our savior, this servant's mission is

to prepare the way for all that scripture tells us to anticipate. By both preparing us to succeed in attending to our covenants, and by encouraging us to love others enough to help those who are struggling, he labors for us and alongside us to teach and inspire. In this we find the purpose of the great endowment, which is emphasized by Isaiah as a blessing meant to empower God's priesthood and servants to go after the lost and the downtrodden. This is beautifully affirming of the rich love that God has for those unaware of him or living outside of the covenant protection he offers.

The chart below reveals the attributes of God's servant and God's people as seen in the last days by Isaiah.

In contrast to the servant, Isaiah's tyrant is revealed as the King of Assyria (or King of Babylon). This tyrant offers promises (and alliances), but ultimately deceives even his most faithful allies. Those who align with him, even in principle, are blind to the possibility of sanctuary in God's kingdom because they either do not understand or will not embrace the sacrifice required of those living in covenant with God.

According to Gileadi, as this tyrant works to enlarge his kingdom, drawing nations into his empire, he will wreak havoc, wiping out much of the population of the earth. Ultimately, he will strike a powerful blow to America, who will be humbled beyond belief. Gileadi shares how even Isaiah is horrified at what he sees happen in this scenario. In this midst of all this chaos, there remains a servant and his followers at work. Indeed, the steps Isaiah describes as needed to reach Zion the place, are what ultimately qualify them as Zion the people. "Ultimately in Isaiah's scenarios," Gileadi explains "the only people who survive are Zion/Jerusalem and levels higher on the ladder."

<b>Works of God and his servant</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>God anoints (as a witness)</li> <li>God appoints (&amp; fills with his spirit)</li> <li>God instructs</li> <li>God answers and guides</li> <li>God heals &amp; consoles</li> <li>God validates (their) ministry</li> <li>God grants an everlasting inheritance</li> </ul>	<p>As the Father endows and enables the servant to go forth unto a specific work; he will do the same (endow) for others that respond in the same way as his servant, Righteousness</p>
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>They call on God</li> <li>They reject evil and choose good</li> <li>They possess wisdom/understanding</li> <li>They relieve others' oppression</li> <li>They have a learned tongue</li> <li>They praise God</li> <li>They draw near to God</li> <li>They follow God's counsel</li> <li>They speak God's word</li> <li>They teach the law of God</li> <li>They are a light to God's people</li> <li>They work justice; judge justly</li> <li>They are an example of righteousness</li> <li>They increase people's joy</li> <li>They put God's enemies to flight</li> </ul>	<p>As God's people move beyond belief in God and truth to exemplifying God and truth, these attributes will be manifest among them. These attributes of God's kingdom will flow from them, just as they do from his servant and from his Son.</p> <p>When the Saints begin to detangle themselves from Babylon's embrace we will see within them a change in focus, a change in inclination and a change in actions. They, like Christ, will become a light to the world.</p>

When the arch-tyrant tries to attack Zion, thinking to deal a deathblow to God’s people, he himself is destroyed (by God).

## Isaiah’s Ladder of Personal Response

In terms of our personal response, Gileadi reveals that “we ourselves determine our place before God by what choices we make—by what spiritual law we live or fail to live. Isaiah’s themes deal with what happens when people ascend or descend the ladder”<sup>3</sup>—meaning what happens when people progress toward greatest light or greatest darkness.

If you view the table at right as a ladder of sorts, you can see Isaiah’s code names for the various levels of response to God, with “King of Assyria” representing the lowest rung (greatest darkness) and “Jehovah” the highest rung (greatest light). Indeed, when reading the scriptural text of Isaiah, and you come across one of these code names, you can know what level of human response Isaiah is referring to.

Each rung on this ladder, therefore, serves as a person’s desirable or undesirable response to God. As Gileadi explains, the more we become like God, the more we are one with God.

Within the text of Isaiah, the Servant-Tyrant parallelism reveals how the king of Babylon exalts himself above all but ends up humiliated below all. His opposite, the King of Zion, is humiliated above all before being exalted above all. These reversals establish the pattern of ‘humiliation before exaltation’ for every level of the ladder.<sup>4</sup> According to Gileadi this means that “each level on the ladder is governed by its own covenant, with a different set of terms. The loftier the level, the higher the law of its covenant. Thus, God’s ‘higher law’ pertains to a higher covenant while a ‘lesser law’ pertains to a lower one. As we grow spiritu-

Isaiah’s Textual Code Name	Describes	Outcome Based on Our Response
Jehovah	God of Israel	Eligible for the Millennium
Seraphim	Angelic Emissaries	
Sons and Daughters	Servants of God (valiant witnesses)	
Zion/Jerusalem	(God’s) Covenant Observing People	
<b>Crossroad</b>		
Jacob/Israel	Believers in a Creator / God	Ineligible for the Millennium (destined for destruction)
Babylon	The Wicked of the World	
King of Assyria	Perdition	

ally more refined and godlike, God’s word becomes more exacting and his requirement for covenantal loyalty greater.”<sup>5</sup> Likewise, as we become more godlike, how we serve and the things we are focused on change.

## The Greatest Takeaways

Christ’s admonition to “study diligently” emphasizes the thorough study needed to truly harvest Isaiah’s message. This short article barely scratches the surface of what is revealed by Gileadi’s study of the Hebrew Isaiah. By helping find clarity in a message intended for a latter-day audience, Gileadi will guide you layer by layer through the nuances of Isaiah’s message. Indeed, he will add to your understanding of other ancient prophets as well. There is no substitute for self-study; no quick summary that will reveal all. There is, however the possibility that Gileadi will open Isaiah’s message to you in a way that allows you to evaluate your place in the end-time scenario with clarity. I encourage you to visit [www.IsaiahExplained.com](http://www.IsaiahExplained.com) and dig into studying Isaiah, embracing Isaiah’s formula for bringing forth Zion. During those “aha!” moments of studying with Gileadi, Isaiah’s message is guaranteed to stir in you a response. Whether you will follow the servant or the tyrant, however, is up to you! †

Materials by Avraham Gileadi in support of this content include: *Isaiah Decoded*, *Windows on the Prophecy of Isaiah*, *The Book of Isaiah – Analytic Translation with Comprehensive Concordance*, *Apocalyptic Commentary on the Book of Isaiah* and [www.IsaiahExplained.com](http://www.IsaiahExplained.com) (Analytical Commentary).

### NOTES:

1. This paragraph based on [www.isaiahinstitute.com](http://www.isaiahinstitute.com) and a recorded interview with Avraham Gileadi
2. *Isaiah Decoded, Ascending the Ladder to Heaven*, p 62-64
3. *Isaiah Decoded, Ascending the Ladder to Heaven*, pp 19&20
4. *Isaiah Decoded, Ascending the Ladder to Heaven*, pp 50
5. *Isaiah Decoded, Ascending the Ladder to Heaven*, pp 52

# The Influence of Faithful Fathers

Following are testimonies by young men whose fathers have left an imprint on their sons in ways that opened to them the goodness of the Messiah and the importance of measuring all things according to the plumb line of Jehovah’s Kingdom. Like those who long ago etched words into plates that are now known as The Book of Mormon, they have expressed themselves in different ways, sharing treasure found in the lives of their fathers, who each sought a right and moral way.

## Generous in Giving

By Jared Gould

My dad has demonstrated many good qualities in his life, such as how to have faith, how to search the scriptures and how to learn the different ways God speaks. The most powerful lesson he has taught me, without ever saying a word, was how to give. I saw him give in abundance, and in times of want. As far as I could tell, he never questioned if he would have enough left for himself. The scriptures tell how Job sought out others that he could help provide for: “I was a father to the poor: and the cause which I knew not I searched out” (Job 29:16).

I am grateful for the ways my father’s generosity has impacted my life.

*Jared is the middle child of Stephen and Judy (Sedlak) Gould.*



One of those things was the influence of my father.

For as long as I am able to remember, my father has been a Godly man. It has been his guidance in our family that led us to have family prayers every night. During evening meals, when we were all together, he would ask us to share a blessing we had received that day.

When he got home late from work on Wednesday evenings, he would push us to get to prayer service. We may have resented it at the time—wanting to play, or read, or do something besides sit in a hour-long service, but one excuse we could never use was that my father was not there as well. If dad was able, he came to church.

I also remember my father leaving early in the morning for scripture study, so he could get time in with the Lord before work. I also recall weeks where he would fast during supper

and leave the house to spend time in study and prayer.

I know my father is not a perfect man, and has many shortcomings, but I can testify that the example set by my father is that of a good man and an active priesthood member. If you are wondering how to keep young people active in the church, it starts with providing them a good foundation from which to build on. That foundation cannot just be talked about, or forced upon them, it must be matched with an example for them to look up to, and see. If fathers are unwilling to sacrifice for a relationship with Christ, their children—their sons—will never see the life-changing reward that only a relationship with Jesus can give.

*Samuel is the eldest son of Michael and Julia (Coulson) Jordison.*

## Setting a Solid Foundation

By Samuel Jordison

Many times the question has been asked of me, “How do we keep our youth in the church?” People seem to think, because I am somewhat young and am still active in the church, that I have a key to help address this problem. For a long time, I didn’t know how to answer this question. I do, after all, have personal experiences I could point to and say, “These are why I’m still here.” I do not know why God gave certain experiences to me, and not to others of our youth, but there are things that have contributed to my life being tied to the Lord and to my desire to be of continual service within his church.

## An Enduring Example

By Amos Johnson

Dear Dad,

Since I can remember, you have been the person I've modeled myself after. Others do not know what to make of you—what to expect from you, and are easily surprised when you differ from your formal self. My friends tell me they are intimidated by you because you seem a bit cold and uncaring at first glance. But I see you in every moment. I've seen you when you were weak, I've seen you when you were strong because you had to be. I've seen you in those moments, and yet all I have ever noticed is peace. I always knew you would take care of any problem, because you would do anything for us kids.

I remember how you taught me. I was never sure what you would do if I failed to do what I was supposed to do. If I had a responsibility, you made sure I followed through. I remember I was so scared to cross you that I made sure I did what you told me to do. But that's long past and now I see you differently. I see you as a caring man, a wise man, a patient man and a comical man. You hold so many attributes I hope to possess one day. As I've grown older, I've begun to talk more with you. I have started to experience a friendship with you—a friendship which has led me to enjoy who you are and to experience a relationship I have never had before.

Thank you also for your guidance. Whenever I have a question about my path or my life, you calmly explain every scenario that is possible, telling me how you see each option and then telling me to decide. Never have you controlled my life choices. You have allowed me to make each and every decision, even when it was the wrong one, so that I could learn.

Thank you, Dad, for teaching me what a Godly man, a disciplined man and a caring man looks like. Having you as a father has been a personal testimony to me of God's greatness. Thank you, God, for giving me this figure in my life after whom I can model myself, knowing that if I have those same qualities, I will surely live a better life, both physically and spiritually.

Love, your son Amos

*Amos is the youngest son of Craig and Paula (Messerli) Johnson.*

## A Friend to All

By Kelvin Henson

One of the most frustrating things I had to endure throughout my childhood was that I could not go anywhere without dad running into a friend and then talking with them for hours. That is a long time for a kid! It seems to me that everybody knows my father in some way or another. Even today he is still introducing me to friends of his whom I have never met. Sometimes a stranger will approach me

and ask me to say hello to my father for them. Often, I cannot even remember their names. Then, when I do tell dad, and try to describe their physical features and suggest what their name might have been, it goes nowhere because he knows too many people who might match their description.

Why is my father so well known? That question becomes even more intriguing when you consider his background. Dad grew up in a small Illinois (USA) town whose population was less than 5,000 people. He then moved to an even smaller town in Iowa, where he attended Graceland College. The population of that town was university enrollment plus a few hundred more. How, you might ask, does a man who spent twenty years of his life in low population areas have such a high popularity? The answer lies in the character of the man. One cannot become as likeable as he and possess bad attributes. Fortunately for me, as his son, I have a lifetime of data to prove my hypothesis. All the good characteristics of my father can be linked to one thing: his love for the gospel of Jesus Christ.

I was involved in many activities growing up. I played sports, sang in different choirs, played trumpet in different bands and did a little bit of acting, to name a few. Dad came to every game, every performance, every show. He was always there. He always supported me, but never pressured me to do any of those activities. The only thing he pressured me about was “getting in the scriptures,” which means spending time studying scripture. Eternal life with God is what matters the most, and true joy only comes by Jesus Christ. The rest, no matter how enjoyable, is all just vanity,



Adventuring at Cirque Peak (Banff National Park), British Columbia, Canada. Left to Right: Samuel Jordison, Kelvin Henson, Amos Johnson & Jared Gould.

Levi Vickery, inspecting a water tower's Cathodic Protection System in eastern Wisconsin.



## Pointing Always to Christ

By Levi Vickery

Growing up schooled at home, I worked with my dad a lot. I remember riding in the truck to and from job sites with him, and listening to him talking about something mentioned on the radio or that he saw while driving. When responding to a question or comment that one of his children made, he always related it back to either the Church, the Gospel, or both. My dad's two favorite subjects to talk about are the Church and the Gospel of Jesus Christ. This has undoubtedly shaped how I view the world around me. Everything I see is somehow directly connected to the Gospel and God's plan of salvation—every positive and every negative because of the influence of my dad's dedication to studying them and how he always tried to relate and teach them to his children.

My dad is not perfect by any means. His constant seeking to be a righteous man before God has taught me that no man is without flaws; however, a good man that seeks to honor and acknowledge his Creator will recognize this about himself and seek to be the best that he can be in Christ Jesus. I think it was Arthur Oakman that said, "What is an apostle except a sinner that has come to know something about the mercy of God?"

I'm sure every parent can relate to the phrase "Do what I say, not what I do," and my dad is no different. One of the biggest things my dad has taught me is to not be like him. This didn't come by way of him saying not to be like him (in fact he has never said that) but more by my observation of how he is. But if you think about it, isn't that what a righteous father should do—teach his children how to be who their Heavenly Father wants them to be, and encourage them to be better people by passing on the knowledge that they have accumulated in their lives so that their children are starting their walk with God that much closer to the mark?

Because people are flawed, and can be wrong in their understanding, my dad cautioned me against accepting any man's word as infallible. He taught me to always seek the truth of God's Word, because God is absolute truth and His Word can always be trusted. So, in a way my dad did say not to be like him. Every time he explained a law or commandment, or principle of the Gospel, dad was in effect saying, "Be like this. Be like Christ. Use Him as your standard and your guide." For every situation the Word is the standard of truth by which it should be judged.

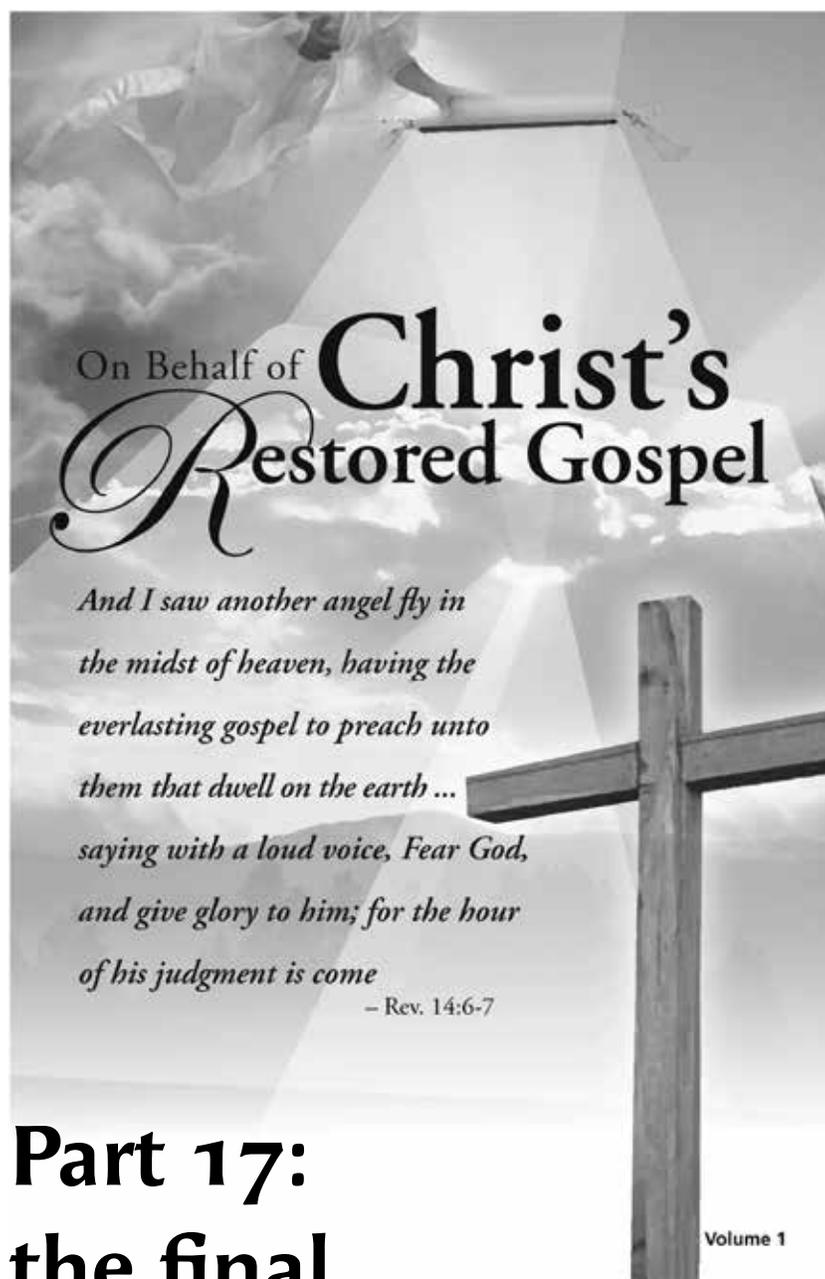
I am not a perfect man, but because my dad seeks to be a godly man, I have learned how to be a seeker of truth and I, too, seek to be a godly man. I seek to honor my Lord and Savior Jesus the Christ, to seek after righteousness, and to share my love of the Gospel with others by having, as Wayne Updike said, "a positive response to an ever-increasing revelation of God." These desires were instilled within me from my earliest age by my parents. In these qualities, I am honored to be like my dad.

*Levi is the fourth son of Jerry and Betty (Nielsen) Vickery. †*

according to Solomon; a fleeting happiness. My father knows this, so although we have fun talking sports history, he makes sure to remind us that the gospel is of the most importance. We have been able to have many scripture studies together, and I find his knowledge of the scriptures to be good. There are times when I bring up a question that is too deep for him to answer, but he encourages me to search it out and then keep searching the depths of the scriptures. There is a lot I could mention here, but to sum it up, it is because of dad's desire for the Kingdom of God that I chose to honor him by asking him to baptize me and participate in my ordination to the priesthood.

One of the most important things we can do each day is to look for Jesus in each person that we meet. My father is good at doing this. He is able to find commonalities with random people he meets and build off of that, getting to know people on a deeper level. I believe this is a gift he has, and one of the key reasons so many people know him. I have witnessed the Lord be able to use that personable gift to reach others through my father, which is pretty cool to watch play out. Dad's commitment to God is why he is such a likeable person. He has adopted good morals in his life and wants to share the love of Jesus with all people, even those of different beliefs, and he does it well.

*Kelvin is the youngest son of Todd and Sherri (Nunn) Henson.*



## Part 17: the final installment in our series

### Evidences that Joseph Smith Was a Prophet

By Bob Moore

#### Part 4

##### 13. Accurate description of space

The same revelation discloses another condition about our universe. It says, "...there is no space in the which there is no kingdom; and there is no kingdom in which there is no space" (D&C 85:9a).

This revelation came three-quarters of a century before the theory of relativity. In the theory of relativity, Albert Einstein showed that the space-time continuum is not flat, but curves depending on the relative speed of an object when compared to light. One corollary stemming from his theory states the same concept contained in Joseph's cited revelation. Einstein explained it this way: "There is no such thing as empty space, i.e., a space without a field. Space-time does not claim existence on its own, but only as a structural quality of the field" (Heeren, *Show Me God*, 119.)

Another example of this principle is the recent discovery of dark matter. Astrophysicists now maintain that the apparent empty space between galaxies of our universe is not really empty but filled with an unseeable substance that they call dark matter. Modern science continues to prove that Joseph was a prophet.

##### 14. Word of Wisdom

In 1833, Joseph presented a revelation called the Word of Wisdom, which instructed the Saints on healthful eating. It warned against consumption of alcohol. "Inasmuch as any man drinketh wine or strong drink among you, behold, it is not good, neither meet in the sight of your Father,..." "... strong drinks are not for the belly" (D&C 86:1b-c).

It warned against the use of tobacco. "... Tobacco is not for the body, neither for the belly" (D&C 86:1d).

It warned against the consumption of caffeine. "...Hot drinks are not for the body or belly" (D&C 86:1e). A decade later, Hyrum Smith, Joseph's brother, said that the term hot drinks referred to coffee and tea (*Times & Seasons* 3 (June 1, 1842): 800), the major source of caffeine at that time.

The revelation recommended eating fruits

and vegetables—“...every herb in the season thereof” (D&C 86:2a)—as well as grain—“All grain is ordained for the use of man and of beasts, to be the staff of life” (D&C 86:2c). It warned against eating too much meat, stating that it should “be used sparingly” (D&C 86:2b).

Today, nutritionists give similar advice to that contained in the Word of Wisdom. Joseph’s revelation remains good advice for healthful eating.

### 15. Prophecy of Joseph’s successor

Joseph prophesied that the prophetic gift that he exercised for the church would be given to another. The prophecy said, “... Through you shall the oracles be given to another” (D&C 87:2a). While Joseph’s successor, his son Joseph III, was barely one year old at the time of this prophecy, he was formally set apart as Joseph’s successor before he was twelve. James Whitehead, an eyewitness to the setting apart ceremony, reported,

**Joseph the son of Joseph the Martyr, he was called, he was appointed by direct revelation from heaven, for his father told us so. Joseph had told us that God had commanded him to do it; and N. K. Whitney, bishop of the church, held the vessel that contained the sacred oil that was poured upon his head (*Autumn Leaves* 1: 202).**

Although the church fragmented after the death of Joseph Jr., and Joseph III steadfastly refused to associate with any faction, he eventually united with the Reorganization and accepted the prophetic office. When he did, he fulfilled his father’s prophecy.

### 16. Saints to return to Independence

Joseph prophesied that although church members would be driven from the land of Zion, faithful Saints, along with their children, would return. The prophecy said,

**Zion shall not be moved out of her place, notwithstanding her children are scattered, they that remain and are pure in heart shall return and come to their inheritances; they and their children, with songs of everlasting joy; to build up the waste places of Zion (D&C 98:4g).**

During the early 1830s, the persecutions against church members gathering in and around Independence intensified as additional Saints joined the first church mem-

bers in Jackson County. They were not only driven from their businesses, homes, and lands, but five years later forcibly expelled from the entire state under the threat of death. Among those Saints were honest, faithful members such as Emma Smith, Joseph’s wife, and their children, one of whom was Joseph III. Some of these expelled Saints returned to Independence.

In particular, the surviving family members of the “Palmyra Seer” came to Independence. Joseph III moved the headquarters of the Reorganized Church to the land of Zion in 1906. Not only did they return, but their children accompanied them. As they did, they and their children, Joseph III, and his children, David Smith, Audentia Smith Anderson, Elbert A. Smith, and Vida Smith, wrote hymns of Zion, many of which are still sung by the Saints. The return of the Reorganized Church to the land of Zion in agreement with Joseph’s prophecy shows that it gathered the faithful Saints. It also illustrates the prophetic ability of Joseph Smith.

### 17. Build up the waste places of Zion

Two months after the above revelation, Joseph again prophesied that faithful church members would return to Independence. The prophecy said,

**But verily I say unto you, I have decreed that your brethren, which have been scattered, shall return to the land of their inheritances and build up the waste places of Zion; for after much tribulation, as I have said unto you in a former commandment, cometh the blessing. Behold, this is the blessing which I have promised after your tribulations, and the tribulations of your brethren; your redemption, and the redemption of your brethren; even their restoration to the land of Zion, to be established, no more to be thrown down (D&C 100:3a-b).**

True to the words of the prophecy, church members who were driven from Jackson County endured much more tribulation than their expulsion from Independence. They moved from Clay County, were driven from Caldwell County, and were later expelled from Missouri. Scattered after the apostasy of church leaders who gained control of the church at the martyrdom of Joseph Smith, some slowly gathered into the Reorganization and began returning to the

The return of the Reorganized Church to the land of Zion ... illustrates the prophetic ability of Joseph Smith.

land of Zion. Once the headquarters of the Reorganization moved to Independence, the Saints began “building up the waste places” by building churches, printing facilities, a conference chamber, a hospital, and a rest home, among other related enterprises.

Today, thousands of believers in the latter-day gospel live in the land of Zion, the very land from which the early Saints were expelled. The return of faithful Saints to the land of Zion as prophesied confirms Joseph Smith as a prophet.

## 18. Rejection of church at Nauvoo

Joseph prophesied that if church members did not build the temple at Nauvoo within the allotted time, the church, along with its dead, would be rejected. The prophecy said,

**But I command you, all ye my Saints, to build a house unto me; and I grant unto you a sufficient time to build a house unto me, and during this time your baptisms shall be acceptable unto me. But, behold, at the end of this appointment, your baptisms for your dead shall not be acceptable unto me; and if you do not these things at the end of the appointment, ye shall be rejected as a church with your dead, saith the Lord your God (D&C 107:10f-11a).**

Baptism for the dead was a permitted ordinance at Nauvoo until the church completed the Nauvoo Temple. Its construction began in 1841, but the Saints finished the Masonic Temple instead. The Nauvoo Temple remained incomplete at the time of Joseph Smith’s murder. When church leaders led most of Nauvoo’s residents west, Brigham Young left workmen in Nauvoo to finish it. According to Brigham, “They got it nearly completed before it was burned” (*The History of the Reorganized Church of Jesus Christ of Latter Day Saints*, 4:566). The fire gutted the incomplete structure. Later, a strong wind blew down the empty shell.

The failure of the church at Nauvoo to complete the Nauvoo Temple marked the rejection of the church that continued to practice baptism for the dead. The prophecy said, “Ye shall be rejected as a church with your dead.” Once the church vacated Nauvoo without finishing the temple, their baptisms for the dead were unacceptable. The only faction of the original church that continued to practice baptism for the dead is the

one led by Brigham Young, the same faction whose practice of polygamy manifested the adulterous desires that had spread among the Saints.

Today, the Utah faction still observes the ordinance of baptism for the dead. Their observance of that rite in direct contradiction of the scriptural instruction shows that they are the rejected church and fulfills Joseph’s prophecy.

## 19. Prophecy of Joseph’s death

Joseph predicted his death before he was murdered. The Nauvoo City Council ordered the destruction of *The Expositor*, a critical paper that had just issued its first installment. Joseph was mayor and presided over the council that made that decision. The destruction of *The Expositor*’s press excited critics. They sought redress from the state.

In response, the state of Illinois issued a warrant for the arrest of Joseph Smith on the grounds that he was responsible for destroying the printing press. The Nauvoo legion stood ready to prevent the state from arresting Joseph and binding him for trial. To prevent a confrontation and possible bloodshed, the Palmyra Seer agreed to give himself up for trial.

Meanwhile, Governor Ford agreed to protect Joseph, sending a detachment of soldiers to accompany him on his trip to Carthage, the county seat and site of the scheduled trial. When Joseph met the cavalry, he told a friend, “I am going like a lamb to the slaughter: but I am calm as a summer’s morning: I have conscience void of offense toward God and toward all men: I shall die innocent” (*Times & Seasons* 5 (July 15, 1844): 585). Joseph never stood trial. He was murdered three days later when a mob stormed the jail at Carthage. Since under the law an accused man remains innocent until a conviction is obtained, Joseph, who died before any trial, died an innocent man. When he did, he fulfilled his own prophecy.

The examples cited in this paper illustrate the prophetic ability of Joseph Smith. It was a gift that he exercised, not of his own making, but was given him by God for the great latter-day work. As time advances, more and more of Joseph’s prophecies are being fulfilled, providing continual evidence that, like the Old Testament prophets who spoke by the power of the Holy Ghost, he also was a prophet of God.

(This concludes the book.) †

**When Joseph met the cavalry, he told a friend, “I am going like a lamb to the slaughter”**

# Into All the World

## North Central United States

In September, Apostles Hugh Caldwell and Doug Patterson traveled to Davenport, Iowa, where they participated in a Book of Mormon Day event held at the Community of Christ Church. The event was planned and hosted by Apostle Kent Pedersen in conjunction with Saints in the area. The brethren were joined by Seventy Frank Frye and Sister Karen Bates, who also made presentations. In attendance were 36 people from the Community of Christ, independent Restoration branches, Remnant Church of Jesus Christ, the Church of Jesus Christ of Latter-Day Saints and persons unaffiliated with the Restoration. The event was well received, and many expressed a desire to repeat the experience again.



Some of those gathered in Davenport, Iowa to hear about the Book of Mormon.

Friends and family gathered outside the Mbanaso home, waiting for the visitation to begin.



## Nigeria

Hensley Mbanaso, a beloved and long-time Seventy, died on July 1, 2018. A funeral and memorial service was planned prior to his burial. There was a mutual desire to have Saints from the U.S. present for the service, and so the funeral was delayed until Sept. 14. Apostle Gary Whiting and President of Seventy Jim McKay traveled to Nigeria for the service.

Prior to their departure, on Sept. 10, Brother Whiting ministered to the Eastgate Restoration Branch in Holden, Mo. Later that afternoon, both brethren participated in a setting apart ceremony for the delegation departing for Tahiti on Sept. 13. Blessings were offered for the members of the Tahitian group and for Brothers Whiting and McKay.

The travel to Nigeria was unremarkable except for a very encouraging sign encountered at the Atlanta airport. Outside of the waiting area, near their departure gate, a brilliant rainbow was seen near the end of the runway. It persisted for about ten minutes and was a great encouragement that the Lord was with them.

After a stop in Paris, they arrived in Lagos, Nigeria, on the evening of Sept. 11. The next day they would travel to Umhaia, Nigeria, the home of Brother Hensley. They were met in Lagos by Elders Anthony Ogbodo (Nigerian Church President) and Samuel Cooper Jimmy (Liberia). Elder Jimmy was there representing the church in Liberia at the funeral. Henry Okechuwu drove the car in which they traveled.

The brethren were welcomed into the Mbanaso home by Sister Gloria, Hensley's widow, and their five children. Many relatives and friends came by over the next few days.

The memorial and funeral service had three main components.

**The Latter Day Saints' Beacon**

The actual funeral activities were held on Friday, Sept. 14. On Thursday evening a service of songs was held on the street outside of the Mbanaso compound (a series of co-joined homes inhabited by various members of the extended family). Multiple hymns were sung, and several people offered remembrances of Brother Hensley. The immediate family was present, prayers were offered and the service was closed after 90 minutes. A band continued to play deep into the morning of Friday, accompanied by some singing.

On Friday morning the family traveled to the mortuary and after brief worship and a prayer by Brother McKay, Hensley's casket was transported to the church for a prayer and then to the house for a time of viewing and visitation. A very large crowd was assembled for the viewing and great emotion and love was demonstrated by those present. After the viewing the casket was taken to the venue for the funeral service. A large clearing at a nearby school was used for the service. Four sections of chairs were arranged under canopies in a rectangular fashion so as to form a square facing the center of the clearing. Another tent was set up in the center, with chairs for the family and a place for the casket.

Several people spoke at the funeral. George Mbanaso, the eldest son, read a biography and the eulogy of his father. Others gave various memorials, with a letter from Bishop Carl Cedersstrom read aloud to the assembly. Brother Whiting gave the exhortation, or sermon, near the end of the service. The Lord gave liberty in the delivery of the message and the gospel was proclaimed as a means of hope for Hensley and all who will trust in and obey Jesus Christ.

After the funeral, the casket was transported to the church where Brother Hensley's remains were buried on the property of the church. It was a long and memorable day indeed.

The third part of the memorial and funeral process was on Sunday, Sept. 16. Brother Whiting taught a class prior to the preaching service. Elder Samuel Cooper Jimmy gave the sermon for the day. Brother McKay participated in the offering and gave a prayer, and Brother Whiting prayed a blessing over the Mbanaso family and benedictory prayer.

During their stay, the brethren also had opportunity to speak with the local priesthood and with Elders Ogbodo and Jimmy about various concerns in their respective countries. They participated in the ordinance of praying for the sick, offered many prayers, shared during times of instruction and made a few visits into the homes of some Saints. Brief contact was also made with members of the Church of Jesus Christ (Bickeronite) in Lagos.

September is part of the rainy season in Nigeria, but the Lord heard the prayers of the missionaries and Saints and withheld the rain in large measure. The Lord does care for his Saints with a tender love. Your continued prayers for Gloria and family will be greatly appreciated. †



*Above: Some of the many people involved in preparing food the day before the funeral of Hensley Mbanaso.*



*Left: Gary Whiting and Jim McKay with Gloria Mbanaso. Gary and Jim are wearing clothes given to them by the Mbanaso family.*

## Eastern United States

After the Book of Mormon event, Brothers Patterson and Caldwell traveled to Xenia, Ill., to minister to a newly organized Restoration Branch (about 25 members).

The brethren then left Illinois to visit a contact in Nashville, Tenn. They found the man in the hospital, so made a short visit and offered a prayer of blessing for him.

While in Nashville, Brothers Patterson and Caldwell attempted to connect with a Cherokee leader who lived in the area. They had first met him in 2016, but on that trip, they were unable to reach him by telephone before leaving for North Carolina. A couple of days later, the man returned their call, and invited them to visit him at a later date.

The brethren then visited with various contacts in Cherokee, N. C.. From there they traveled

## Bishop's Corner

## The Stewardship of the Body

By B. A. Stuart

to Weaverville to meet with the Fire Keeper of the Eastern Band of the Uncarded Cherokee. During this visit they compared understandings of covenants.

The brethren then journeyed to South Carolina and visited contacts in Columbia and Sumpter. They were blessed with several opportunities to give ministry to the Saints there.

From South Carolina the pair traveled to Imperial, Penn., near Pittsburgh. They arrived on a Saturday evening and were received into the home of members of the Church of Jesus Christ (Bickertonites). Several members of the local congregation gathered with them that evening around the dinner table. Their pastor shared a scripture that he had received on Friday night, saying he believed the Lord wanted them to occupy their pulpit on Sunday. The brethren shared several testimonies at the morning service, and after a wonderful meal, the pair traveled to Hugh's son and daughter-in-law's home for the evening.

On Monday, Oct. 7, they left Pennsylvania to visit a young couple in Indianapolis. They were able to share the Book of Mormon and the importance of following Christ. The visit was well-received, and the couple agreed to follow-up ministry. †



Arlene Buffington, Tim Tarbuck, Becky Tarbuck; members of the Church of Jesus Christ in Imperial, Pennsylvania.

Alma, the former priest of Noah, became the founder of the Church of Christ among the Nephites. After his repentance, he taught the word of God according to the teaching of Abinadi and the holy prophets before him. After the church was organized in the forest near the Waters of Mormon, Alma deliberately established some wise standards of conduct for the church and the ministry.

In the June-July 2017 *Beacon*, this column discussed Alma's instructions for the priesthood of the church. This one will review Alma's instruction to the people concerning their financial stewardship.

It is implied in Alma's remarks that the members of the church would be industrious. He expected the priests to labor for their own support (Mosiah 9:57) just as the rest of the church would do. If he specifically taught them to be industrious, we do not have that record, but Moroni did engrave some of Alma's words regarding the financial duties of the members of the Church of Christ.

Alma taught the members to be free with their substance, or, in other words, to be generous in giving. The degree of generosity was directly related to what an individual had:

**And again, Alma commanded that the people of the church should impart of their substance, every one according to that which he had; If he have more abundantly, he should impart more abundantly; and he that had but little, but little should be required; and to him that had not should be given. And thus they should impart of their substance, of their own free will and good desires towards God, and to those priests that stood in need, yea, and to every needy, naked soul. And this he said unto them, having been commanded of God (Mosiah 9:60-63).**

## God's stewardship plan provides equity

God's stewardship plan does not create a hardship for his people. Although it may require sacrifice, it is always equitable. Here is an example of a place where the Restored gospel provides needed clarification. Equality is frequently defined as everyone receiving the same amount of economic support; one house, one car and the same amount of money. The Lord defined equality quite differently in the Doctrine and Covenants and in practical terms:

**Wherefore let my servant Edward Partridge ... appoint unto this people their portion, every man equal according to their families, according to their circumstances, and their wants and needs (D&C 51:1b).**

**And you are to be equal, or in other words, you are to have equal claims on the properties, for the benefit of managing the concerns of your stewardships, every man according to his wants and his needs, inasmuch as his wants are just (D&C 81:4e).**

Both revelations define equality in terms of what a person manages or supports—the size of a family, the particular circumstances of that individual (recent illness, losses, gains, etc.), their wants and needs. The idea of need is straightforward—something required for life, safety or to maintain a business or livelihood. A want is something which is desired, but not necessarily an essential.

These revelations from the Doctrine and Covenants show the soundness of Alma's instruction to his people. Everyone should contribute to the common equality of the society known as the church. Some people will be blessed with resources greater than their needs and justified wants. The Lord is not pleased when we keep these resources for ourselves while others suffer for lack of necessary resources.

## Giving is one sign of a gathered condition

Alma recognized that the act of giving and supporting the body is an active sign of being a part of the body. Regardless of a person's prosperity, each member should plan to give. It is not uncommon for members to do well for a time and then have a period of need. This principle is not limited to finances but is applicable in spiritual matters as well.

Spiritual gifts are distributed among the members according to the will of the Father. These spiritual gifts, one or more, reside in every member of the body. Apostle Paul clearly states that the spiritual gifts are for the blessing and strengthening of the body of Christ, or the church (1 Corinthians 12:7-12).

By the principle of stewardship identified by Alma, we are ministers to one another in the temporal and spiritual realms. Christian life is a corporate life, i.e., it is lived out in a body or a society and not by individual effort alone. It is impossible to fully live

the Christian life alone. Hence, there is a gathering principle underlying the life of a disciple. To resist the call to gather is to resist the plan of God. Furthermore, giving is a sign of being gathered into the body of Christ.

Alma indicated that giving is to be "of their own free will and good desires towards God" (Mosiah 9:62). Giving is a conscious choice which is motivated by good desires toward God. What are these good desires? Reverence, gratitude, submission, love, obedience and longing for his fellowship must be considered as good desires toward God. It means we love each other actively because of our love for God and his love in us.

Finally, it is important to note the provision for the support of the priest who lacked. Alma had already instructed the priests not to depend upon the people's labor for their support (Mosiah 9:57, 59). Is he contradicting himself? The minister, like any other member of the body may face a situation requiring the support of the church. Alma's prohibition was against regular or salaried sup-

port. This is a clarification that if circumstances required some help for the priest whose labors have proved insufficient, who has some urgent need, that the ministry may seek and receive that help. This may also anticipate a minister whose labors in the ministry have prevented him from spending enough time to earn enough to be self-sufficient. This may include an extended journey or even persecution, jail or injuries.

Alma's instruction to the newly formed church in the land near the Waters of Mormon were wise and practical. They agree with the instructions received through our latter day prophets as well. Alma reinforces the necessity of our free will in giving while also linking a member's response to their "good desires toward God." Alma had seen abuses under King Noah which he desired to avoid. He was keenly aware of the need to act in a manner pleasing to God. He had learned to ask God for wisdom and God commanded him with the words he gave to his people (Mosiah 9:63). They are words worthy of our attention still today. †



# The Little Beacon

## Small Plates, Mormon and our Wise God

By Genie Simmons

The *small plates* of Nephi contain the first six books in our Book of Mormon: 1 Nephi, 2 Nephi, Jacob, Enos, Jarom and Omni. Nephi made these plates because the Lord's spirit told him to do so. He already had made "other plates," or the *large plates*, and their history was on them. The small plates were special, because on them was a religious history of Lehi and his family, the Lamanites and the Nephites. That is, up until Omni (1 Nephi 2:94-99/9:2-5).

Omni was asked by his father, Jarom, to keep the record for "our genealogy." The Book of Omni goes on to name record keepers for three generations. We see that Omni passed the plates to his son, Amaron; who passed them to his brother, Chemish; who passed them to his son Abinadom; who passed them to his son, Amaleki; and from there to King Benjamin.

Amaron calls the plates "the book of my father" and reports that the Nephites have NOT kept the commandments and have NOT prospered in the land.

Chemish, Amaron's brother, testified that Amaron wrote the plates in his own hand and gave them to Chemish.

Abinadon, son of Chemish, reported that he spent his life at war and that there were many contentions (disagreements) between Lamanites and Nephites. Abinadon said the kings kept a record for the generations and he knew of no revelations during his time.

Amaleki lived during the reign of King Mosiah. Mosiah was warned by the Lord to flee the Land of Nephi with whomever would leave with him. In the wilderness, they listened to the Lord and were led by his word.

Mosiah and his people were led to a place populated by another group. This group called themselves the people of Zarahemla and the Land of Zarahemla was their home. They had come out of Jerusalem at the time when King Zedekiah was taken captive into Babylon. Like Lehi and his family, they had been brought across the waters by God and had lived in the Book of Mormon lands ever since.

The group led by Mosiah was very happy to find the people of Zarahemla, but were saddened by the tale they told of contentions, wars and bloodshed. Mosiah's people discovered that the other group had allowed their language to be changed over the many years. They had also denied

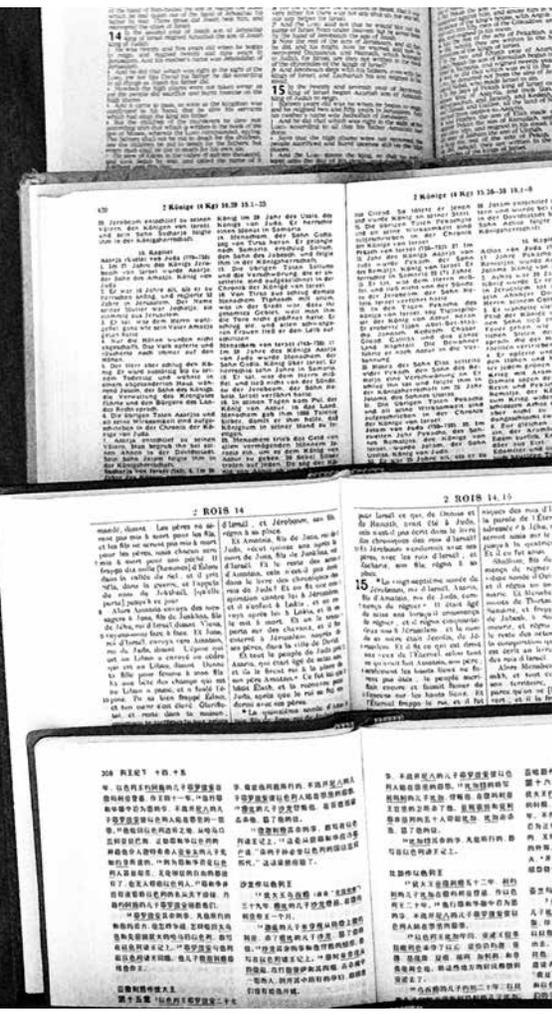
their Creator. The two groups, happy to have found one another, united with Mosiah as their leader.

Mosiah had the people of Zarahemla taught in the language of his people. The oral genealogy of the people Mosiah had discovered was told by Zarahemla and written on other plates. The people of Zarahemla had in their possession a stone with engravings on it, but they could not read it. King Mosiah had been given the gift and power to interpret writing by God, and was able to learn that the engravings told the story of a man named Coriantumr, who had lived with the people of Zarahemla for nine months. Coriantumr's forefathers had left the great tower at the time of the confounding of languages and came to these lands as well. The people of Zarahemla noted that the Lord had given judgment over them and their bones lay scattered in the Land Northward.

Amaleki, who had received the plates from his father Abinadom, knew King Benjamin was a just man, so he gave these plates to him, knowing they would be kept safe.

This might be the end of the story of the small plates, but many years later, a man named Mormon found them when he was condensing, or abridging, records. He read the small plates and found them to be pleasing, because they prophesied about Christ. The Lord's spirit pressed him to include them, as they were written, with the plates he was abridging "for a wise purpose." He did not know why; he just hoped that the prophecies in them would someday help the Lamanites find Christ. Mormon began abridging the records at the age of twenty-four.

This might have been the end of the Book of Mormon story, but in July of 1828 Martin Harris borrowed and lost the first 116 pages that had been translated from the Book of Mormon. Because of this, the gift to translate records was taken away from Joseph for a time, but later it was returned and he began translating again. The Lord told Joseph Smith that Satan had caused the words from these 116 pages to



Called and Sent Forth  
as Fathers to God's People

# Invitation for Patriarchal Ministry During 2019 General Conference

During the April, 2019 General Conference, the Patriarch/Evangelists will preside over morning worship services that rely less on program structure and more on God's Spirit to lead the service and its participants. They will come prepared and ready for God's Spirit in every way. The model for this type of worship has already been established for us in the Book of Mormon:

**And their meetings were conducted by the church, after the manner of the workings of the Spirit, and by the power of the Holy Ghost; for as the power of the Holy Ghost led them whether to preach or exhort, or to pray, or to supplicate, or to sing, even so it was done (Moroni 6:9/6:9).**

Provision will be made to enable participants to receive Administration, as requested, or even Special Blessings as needed. These services are reliant solely upon the presence of God's Spirit and will require everyone to attend them hungering for the Spirit of Christ. To prepare for these blessings and for His Spirit to attend these worship sessions, all who come should come penitent, humble and expectant. †

be altered, so that they now read contrary to their original meaning (D&C 3:6a-e /10:30-34). Because of Satan's plan to make the truth a lie, the Lord told Joseph NOT to translate the 116 pages again (D&C 2:6a-e/2:16-19). Joseph was then commanded to show no one of the world what he had translated. The other, or small plates of Nephi, were to be placed at the beginning of the book

to replace what was stolen! God had a plan to stop Satan even before the theft was made.

**R e m e m b e r ,  
remember, that it is not  
the work of God that is  
frustrated, but the work  
of men (D&C 2:2a/3:3).**

The complete story can be found in Omni, Mormon 1:1-6/1:1-5, D&C sections 2/3 and 3/10 and Words of Mormon 1:1-12/1:1-8. †

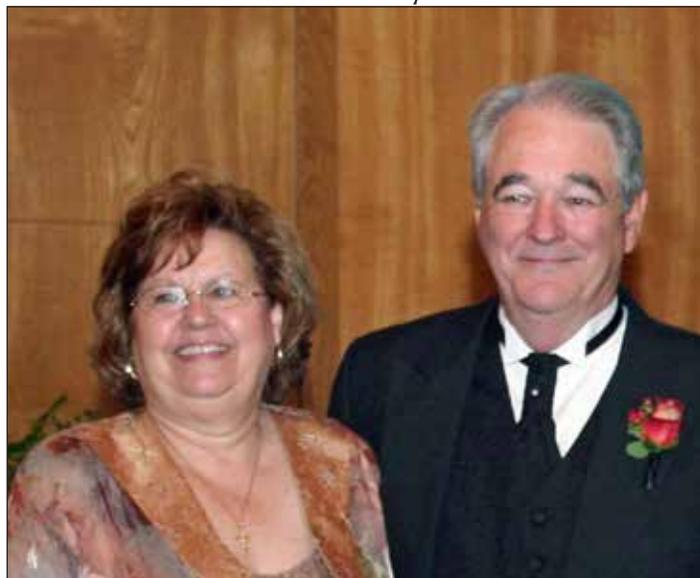
Patriarch Jerry Vickery and wife Betty.



Patriarch Neil Simmons and wife Sally.



Patriarch Fred Greene and wife Carolyn.



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# 2019 General Conference

## “Rejoice and Prepare Yourselves”

From April 15-19, 2019, our next General Conference will be held in Independence, Missouri (USA). This is a five-day, Monday through Friday conference. Interactive sessions are planned, with enough flexibility in the overall schedule to encourage responsiveness to the leadings of the Spirit in a way that in large part sets the course and content for the conference as the week progresses. Activities of the conference will be focused on the readiness of the Saints in preparing for the Bridegroom.

President (High Priest) Sherman Phipps has asked Saints to pray earnestly for this conference, and to come prepared to offer their gifts and to participate as the Spirit directs. Should you wish to contact Brother Phipps directly, he can be reached at [president@ConferenceOfBranches.org](mailto:president@ConferenceOfBranches.org) or by calling the JCRB Office (816-252-2295) for his phone number.

Wherefore, be faithful, praying always, having your lamps trimmed and burning, and oil with you, that you may be ready at the coming of the Bridegroom; for, behold, verily, verily I say unto you, that I come quickly (D&C 32:3e/33:17-18).

If ye are faithful, ye shall assemble yourselves together to rejoice upon the land of Missouri, which is the land of your inheritance... (D&C 52:9d/52:41).

Therefore ... labor diligently, that you may be perfected in your ministry, to go forth among the Gentiles for the last time, as many as the mouth of the Lord shall name, to bind up the law, and seal up the testimony, and to prepare the Saints for the hour of judgment, which is to come; that their souls may escape the wrath of God, the desolation of abomination, which await the wicked, both in this world, and in the world to come ... Abide ye in the liberty wherewith ye are made free; entangle not yourselves in sin, but let your hands be clean, until the Lord come, for not many days hence and the earth shall tremble, and reel to and fro as a drunken man, and the sun shall hide his face, and shall refuse to give light, and the moon shall be bathed in blood, and the stars shall become exceeding angry, and shall cast themselves down as a fig that falleth from off a fig tree. Prepare ye, prepare ye, O inhabitants of the earth, for the judgment of our God is come: behold, and lo, the Bridegroom cometh, go ye out to meet him (D&C 85:23, 24 & 25d/88:84-92).

Go ye forth unto the land of Zion, that the borders of my people may be enlarged, and that her stakes may be strengthened, and that Zion may go forth unto the regions round about; yea, let the cry go forth among all people: Awake and arise and go forth to meet the Bridegroom (D&C 108:3c/133:9-10).

